

RELIGIOUS INFORMER.

Vol. I.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 1819.

No. 2

ANDOVER, N. H.—Published by Ebenezer Chase.

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people."— Luke, II. 10.

THE INFORMER

Is published in Andover, N. H. every other Tuesday, at 75 Cents a year, if paid in advance, or one Dollar, if paid at the end of the year.

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Excellency of true Religion.

True religion gives an engaging delicacy to our manners, which education or nature may manure, but can never attain to.

A sense of our infirmities and insufficiency makes us modest. A sense of divine presence makes us decent and sincere. A sense of our corruption, natural and moral makes us humble. A sense of the divine goodness and mercy makes us obliging and compassionate. A sense of our immortality, makes us cheerful and happy. True religion is a principle of heavenly peace and light within us, which expands itself over the human frame and conduct, and sheds light and beauty on all around us. At ease within ourselves we cannot give others trouble; when the master is God, the servant is Godlike, and if our conversation be on heaven, the graces of heaven will dwell on our lips, and shine forth in our actions. Religion where it is sincerely embraced, gives contentment and patience to the sick, joy to the penitent, strength to the weak, sight to the blind, and life in death itself.

MINISTERS OF RELIGION.

*May they preach to their hearers the gospel of peace,
Watch more for their flocks, and less for the fleece.*

THE TOLERATOR.

*In faith and hope the world will disagree;
But all mankind's concern is charity;
All must be false that twist this one great end;
And all of God that bless mankind or mend.*

It is much to be regretted, that the conduct of many of those, who have solemnly promised to govern their actions by the precepts and example of Jesus Christ, cannot bear a comparison with his sublime system of morals. Indeed so great is the dissimilarity, it is very surprising that they themselves do not perceive it. Their perceptive powers are sufficiently acute to espy a fault in a brother's conduct, whilst their own is apparently never self-scrutinized. To

*"Teach me to feel anothers woe, to hide the fault I see,
That mercy I to others show, that mercy show to me,"*

seems to escape their recollections. I appeal to the senses of every member of society, if he has not more or less, when in a company of "religious persons," observed a great want of charitable feelings, and even common civility towards such, as were of a different persuasion. And, if it happens that the group is composed of more than one sect, a stranger would often be led to conclude, that the assembly represented something very different from an association of saints! This is the truth, however mortifying to some, and shocking to others. It is a fact that speaks louder than words and requires no comment.

It is well known too, that all men never did judge alike in matters of faith; and yet we know to a certainty, there are some who will not hold communion and fellowship with any, but those who subscribe to certain human creeds and regulations. The essential points of religion are almost totally neglected, whilst the nonessentials are seized hold of with an avidity, expected only in the ignorant and barbarous.

It is the general uniform conduct of a man, which should be proof of his pretensions to a genuine pious disposition; and when this proof is wanting, however strong his professions may be, no confidence ought to be placed in his assertions. One year of exemplary behaviour, of good deeds and kind offices, produces greater and better effects, than all the exhortation, that a man is capable of giving through all his life, however long it may be; and were all of us as active to do good, as to talk about it, happiness would much more abound.

Kaleidoscope.

GOOD TIDINGS.

WE have great reason, my brethren, to rejoice, that God is visiting his people, and numbers are daily added to the church of such as (we hope) will be saved. Letters have been received from various places, giving accounts of the outpouring of God's spirit, in the salvation of souls. Elder Edward B. Rollins of Walpole, N. H. writes to the Editor of the Christian Herald, that in the town where he resides, the work of God has been progressing—nine have recently been baptized. Twelve have been baptized in Westmoreland, and in Gulsom forty. In Surry, an old lady, over eighty years of age, in company with her grand-child, have been baptized.

He states that Alstead has experienced a revival of late, and that the churches, in that place, are increasing in number and strength.

Elder Mark Fernald mentions a revival of religion in New-Durham gore, part of Brookfield, and the border of Wolfborough. He says, "I would just observe, that the Lord has wrought wonders with all classes, from Middleton corner to Wolfborough line, 6 miles; scarce a house escaped without some of its inhabitants sharing in the work."

Mr. Hunn, of Sandwich, writes to his friend in Philadelphia, stating that about 150 have recently become hopeful subjects of the Redeemer's kingdom.

In a letter from a gentleman in Charlestown, S. C. we learn that about 400 persons in the District of York are rejoicing in the hope of an interest in the Saviour.

Thus, *The wilderness doth sweetly ring
With prayer and praises to the King.*

Extract of a letter from Elder Joseph Merrill, to the Editor of the Christian Herald, dated May 24, 1819.

Dear Brother,

Being anxious to give and receive intelligence relative to the increase of the kingdom of Christ, I send you the following account of the state of religion in these regions. Eight years ago I moved into this town, at which time the state of religion was very low; I laboured, in my feeble way, more than six years, through many trials, and could see but very little fruit of my labors, and was sometimes almost ready to leave the place; but having a strong impression on my mind at times, that I should

see the Redeemer's kingdom flourish in this place, I knew not how to leave, until the Lord had blessed us with a harvest. At length our anticipations have been realized—the seventh year was a *Jubilee* in very deed.

In the Summer of 1817, there appeared signs of rain, and in the last of September, the work broke out and spread very rapidly in this and in the adjoining towns. Brother T. Lewis has been laboring almost two years and has been much blest in this quarter, the work was very powerful and the most solemn I ever witnessed. I have baptized one hundred and eighty in about nine months, and brother L. as many more. The revival has been experienced also in Clinton, Cornville, Athens, North-hill, Harmony, Ripley, Solon, Palmyra, Exeter, and the adjoining places. Brother J. Robinson has been laboring in Noridgewock and Madison, where there is a good work of the Lord. Eleven churches have been gathered since the reformation began, and they generally stand fast in the liberty of the sons of God. The work still progresses.

(Charge, Continued from page, 6.)

Maintain Christian order and discipline, and behave thyself impartially and wisely in the house of God. If any man, through inadvertence and surprise, be overtaken in a fault, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted. Them who sin habitually and openly, rebuke before all, that others may fear. A man that is a heretic, one that is aspiring and contentious, causing divisions and offences, after the first and second admonition, reject, in order that peace and unity may be maintained.

When called in providence to separate others to the work of the gospel ministry, you will not forget the apostolic injunction, lay hands suddenly on no man; but will have satisfactory evidence of the religious character, blameless life, theological attainment, and aptness to teach, of those whom you shall ordain elders in the churches.

Remember, that as a minister of Jesus Christ, you are set for the defence of the gospel; and are required to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, in opposition to those who deny the only Lord God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, his messenger of light and love to the world.

Know the state of thy flock, and give to every one his portion in due season. Visit the sick, console the afflicted, support the

weak, be patient towards all men. Surrounded by Christians, whose religious opinions and modes of ecclesiastical government, may not entirely accord with your own, you will cherish towards them sentiments of affection and respect, and treat them as brethren. Should any feel, and conduct towards you in a different manner, you will remember that the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth.

Let no man despise thee, or have just occasion to speak of thee with reproach, that the ministry be not blamed, and the truth hindered. But by propriety, and dignity of deportment, and usefulness of life, commend yourself to the esteem, and consciences of all in the sight of God. Be an example of believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

In all things show thyself a pattern of good works. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Situated as you are, the application and use of this saying of Christ will be readily perceived.

Stir up the gifts that are in thee, and let thy profiting appear unto all. Observe with due attention the burning and shining lights, which may be placed in the golden candlestick around you. This may afford useful excitement to trim your own lamp, and thus cause it to burn with a purer and brighter flame.

Having been allowed of God to be put in trust with this ministry, so speak, so live, so fulfil its various duties, not as pleasing men, but God who trieth the heart.

To make men wise, good, and happy, is the great end of your sacred vocation. Keep this end constantly in sight. Let all inferior, and comparatively unworthy aims and motives, which are so apt to insinuate and wind themselves into the human heart, be eaten up by a holy zeal for doing good, as the deceptive magic serpents of Egypt were once swallowed up by the holy rod of Aaron.

Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know your labour is not in vain in the Lord. And now unto him, who is able, not only to keep you from falling, but to make you eminently useful in his service, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.—Amen.

(*U. Magazine.*)

Extract from the Boston Kaleidoscope.

THE MORALIST.

The reasonableness of early piety is in no respect unnatural and hard. We know that youth is an age of cheerfulness; and we know likewise, that Religion is no enemy to this, since it deprives no one of any thing that is truly desirable; but only cautions and forbids the practice of that which is prejudicial and hurtful.

Religion will cause a man to adorn the highest, and be contented in the lowest station. The government of the passions, the knowledge and practice of all christian duties, the approbation of the conscience, and the improvement of the understanding, are of more value, than this poor world can give, or take away; and these ought therefore to be principally esteemed and regarded.

The most pleasing sight in the world, is a well improved, pious youth; one fitted to adorn society, and intent upon doing it; and that parent or master, who has been instrumental in training up one such character, by his example and precept, deserves the highest commendation and reward, and will have them from his God, if not from men.

From the Christian Watchman.

CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

It must be highly gratifying to the friends of religious liberty, that its nature and happy tendency are now better understood than formerly both in the old world and the new; and that this knowledge is rapidly extending its salutary influence through the world. In England, the claims of the Catholics assume an imposing attitude; for in the House of Commons in May last, a motion to afford them relief was negatived by a majority of but two. Their final success seems almost certain, and will be hailed in America as the triumph of reason and knowledge over bigotry and superstition, and of liberty over tyranny. The law relating to ministerial taxes, lately passed in New-Hampshire, may be considered as a just cause of congratulation to the enemies of religious tyranny and intolerance.

Perhaps there is no event in the compass of human observation, now transpiring in the providence of God by human agency, which has and will continue to have, so happy a tendency upon the civil and religious rights of man, as the spread of the holy

scriptures, and their rapid translation into all languages. The knowledge of that book which asserts that "God hath made of *one blood* all nations of men;" which recognizes no distinction of nobility or clergy; and considers all men endowed by the God of nature with equal liberty; which gives no preference of one man to another, different from that which arises from superior excellence of character; the universal diffusion and cordial reception of this book will fix immoveably the civil and religious privileges of our race, on a foundation which tyrants and infidels may assail in vain.

Hint to Public Speakers.

The venerable Witherspoon late president of the New-Jersey College, once observed to the students under his care, that probably some of them would be called to public speaking, either in political bodies, or from the pulpit. "*Should this,*" said he, *be the case, I have this laconic advice to give you. 1. Never attempt to speak unless you have something valuable to say. 2. Always conclude when you have nothing important to deliver without a reputation of what you have already said.*" Were this hint generally attended to, the patience of audiences would not be so frequently exhausted by puerile discourses, nor tried with tedious repetition.

Items of News.

Much damage was done, on June 20th, in Montreal and St. Andrews, Canada, by a storm of thunder, wind and hail.

Six hundred and eighty foreigners died at Havanna, between the first of May and middle of June.—A man lately died in Montreal, in consequence of being poisoned, while skinning an ox which had died suddenly.—The plague, which had raged with such violence along the African shore of the Mediterranean, has very considerably abated its ravages, except at Tetuan, where more than a thousand persons died in one fortnight; and at Fez, the daily deaths were upwards of 400.

A horse was killed by lightning in Concord, Ms. while traveling in a chaise.—The Small pox rages in Freedom, & Fairfax.

DIED,

In this town, Hannah True, daughter of Deacon William True, aged 17. *Also,* An Infant of Mr. David Rowe.

In Salisbury, Mrs. Nancy Dunlap, consort of Leut. Samuel Dunlap, aged 61.

POETRY.

On the Crucifixion of CHRIST.

- 1 **S**AW ye my Saviour, saw ye my Saviour,
Saw ye my Saviour the Lord;
O he di'd on Calvary to atone for you and me,
And has purchas'd our pardon with blood.
- 2 He was extended, truly extended,
Painfully nail'd to the cross,
O he bow'd his head and di'd, thus our Lord was crucifi'd
To atone for a world, that was lost.
- 3 Jesus hung bleeding, groaning and bleeding.
Three dreadful hours in pain;
O the sun refus'd to shine, when his Majesty Divine
Was derided, insulted, and slain.
- 4 Darkness prevailed, day was concealed,
Horror invaded the land;
O The solid rocks did rend through creation's vast extent,
When the jews crucifi'd the good man.
- 5 When it was finish'd, when it was finish'd,
Christ, the atonement had made;
He was taken by the great, and embalm'd in spices sweet,
And in Joseph's new sepulchre laid.
- 6 Hail mighty Saviour Glorious Saviour!
Prince and the author of peace;
O he burst the bands of death rose, and triumph'd o'er the earth,
And ascended to mansions of bliss.
- 7 Now interceding, now interceding,
Pleading that sinners might live;
"Behold my hands and side—Father I was crucifi'd,
To redeem them—I pray thou'dst forgive.
- 8 I will forgive them, I will forgive them,
If they'll repent and believe—
Repent return to me and be reconcild in thee,
And Salvation they all shall receive."

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